



### TREES BEST FOR LAND

*"I wanted to improve the environment and increase the value of the land. So, I planted it to trees. The CRP and WRP programs are both good for tree planting. My land with a perpetual easement in WRP will always be trees."*

**— Jack and Marilyn Miner, Madison County**



### TREES ARE HIS PASSION

*"Without the CRP, more of the farm would be in cropland. But it should be in trees. I wouldn't have imagined in 1990 we could have what we have here now. We're out here after work every night until dark. I can relax here."*

**— Ron and Carol Fullenkamp, Lee County**



Insurance is his business, but trees are Ron's passion. The Fullenkamps have planted more than 100,000 trees on 15 acres of CRP since 1990, some from seeds gathered by hand. As a community service, the couple have donated more than 150 good-sized trees for city parks, memorials, and neighbors who want to dress up their front yards. Among the 54 different species of trees on the Fullenkamps' 136-acre tree farm is a walnut that may be the most valuable of any in Iowa.



# PLANT TREES



*WITH HELP FROM*  
**CRP**





### CHILDREN'S LEGACY

*"Our goal is to build a legacy for our children with our children. The trees our kids have helped plant will grow along with our kids. Our children may leave, but I think the trees will always tie them back to the land."*

— **Jim and Jody Kerns**  
Delaware County



### TREES ARE A SAVIOR

*"We're trying to develop high value trees like walnut, white oak and red oak. We're looking for fifty to sixty good trees an acre when it's time to harvest. Our grandchildren will be the beneficiaries financially of this work."*

— **Chuck and Marian Edelen**  
Edelen, Hancock County



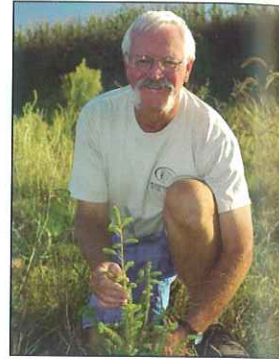
Chuck Edelen's home is 150 miles from where he's put his heart into a 131-acre family tree farm. "I'm at the farm about thirty weekends a year and spend from ten to fifteen hours tending trees during those weekends," Chuck says. His wife Marian says the tree farm has been a savior for Chuck. "He would get off work on a Friday, change clothes, and head to the farm a different person," Marian says. A written stewardship plan guides Chuck in managing his six stands of trees.



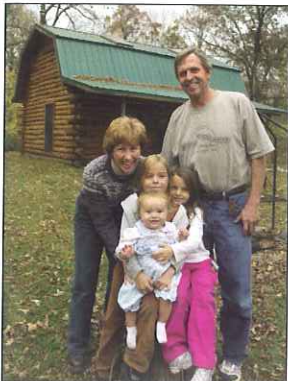
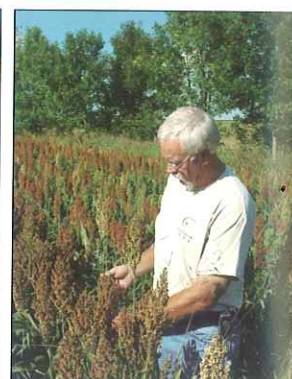
### BUFFERS FOR WILDLIFE

*"We decided we wouldn't need to hunt anywhere else if we put pheasant-friendly habitats on our own land. In 2001, we harvested 9 pheasants. In 2002, the harvest went to 13, then 21 in 2003 and 30 in 2004. You can't put a value on these trees and grasses."*

— **Gary Olsen, Audubon Co.**



Nearly half the Marion Olsen and Evelyn Olsen Trusts land are planted to grasses or trees in the USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), in an effort to bring back the pheasant hunting the entire Olsen family enjoys. That includes about 40 acres of trees and 80 acres of grass in riparian buffers on three farms. In addition to the wildlife benefits, Olsen says it makes sense economically to plant buffers with the CRP program.





# They're growing Iowa's W





# Woodlands- You can, too.

## Facts about Iowa's Woodlands

It's a fact. Landowners like the five couples featured in this publication have helped replant Iowa. In fact, Iowa's forests had dwindled from an original 7 million acres to only 1.4 million acres in 1974. The state now has 2.8 million acres, surpassing the acreage of woodlands more than a century ago.

How much of that woodland is privately owned? About 138,000 woodland owners own 90% of the woodlands in the state.

Other interesting facts:

- Since 1954 Iowa has annually lost 5,800 acres of oak forest. Iowa is currently losing about 1% of its oak forest annually.
- According to the Iowa Society of American Foresters, forests contribute more than \$800 million to the state's economy each year.
- More than 12,000 Iowans are employed in the woodland industry.
- There are two private, non-profit organizations devoted to supporting sustainable forestry in Iowa- the Iowa Woodland Owners Association and the Iowa Tree Farm system.
- The IDNR has 16 District Foresters available to assist private landowners on all aspects of planting and managing trees. They may also refer you to private foresters who assist on a fee basis.
- A survey of Iowa woodland owners indicates most own woodlands to enjoy their beauty and to help protect nature and wildlife.

## If you like to see wildlife

Most people who plant trees want to see more wildlife on their land. District foresters of the IDNR can help you develop a long-term plan to provide wildlife habitat for specific species as your woodland grows and changes. A few things to keep in mind:

- In selecting trees to plant, favor trees and shrubs that produce seed, berries and fruit. Plants such as dogwood, chokecherry and ninebark hold their mast, berries or fruit through the winter to supply critical food.
- Include conifers. They supply important winter cover for wildlife.
- To optimize habitat for the widest range of species, try to maintain as much vegetative diversity as possible.
- Woodland openings, especially along ridgetops, add wildlife "edge" for species needing edge.
- Large, mature trees that produce nuts and acorns and offer roosting are essential habitat for turkeys, squirrels and deer. Especially important for turkey roosting are large trees on ridgetops and along lowland drainage banks.
- Periodic brush cutting, understory burning, and selective tree thinning will improve understory vegetation, a critical part of woodland habitat for many species.
- Don't allow livestock to overgraze, trample, and compact soil in woodlands.

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**Plant IOWA GROWN trees and shrubs**  
The Iowa State Forest Nursery grows a large selection of IOWA GROWN trees and shrubs for conservation planting. There are also private nurseries in Iowa that have IOWA GROWN seedlings.  
DNR foresters have a listing of nurseries that supply plant material appropriate for your area. In addition, a listing of private nurseries that grow conservation seedlings is available on the Internet at [www.state.ia.us/forestry](http://www.state.ia.us/forestry)  
Foresters promote the use of IOWA GROWN conservation trees and shrubs. IOWA GROWN means that seed sources are hardy and adaptable to Iowa growing conditions. They offer the best value and opportunity to enhance economic opportunities and wildlife values on your property.



# 16 Ways CRP helps landowners plant trees in Iowa

*Payments and eligibility summary of practices offered in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)*



## **Tree Planting (CP 3)**

Establish trees in a timber planting to enhance the environment. More than half the eligible field may be planted to conifers.

## **Payments**

Owners bid land in, usually between \$100 to \$150 per acre per year for 10 years. 50% cost-share reimbursement for installation. Maintenance cost-share of \$4/acre per year.

## **Eligible land**

Land cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001 that is otherwise eligible for the General CRP signup.



## **Hardwood Tree Planting (CP 3A)**

Establish predominantly hardwood trees in timber to enhance environmental benefits. Diverse mix of species preferred; must be more than 50% hardwoods.

## **Payments**

Owners bid land in, usually between \$100 to \$150 per acre per year for 10 to 15 years. 50% cost-share reimbursement for installation. Maintenance cost-share of \$4/acre per year.

## **Eligible land**

Land cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001 that is otherwise eligible for the General CRP signup.



## **Wildlife Habitat Corridor (CP4B)**

Plantings of grasses, trees and shrubs in travel lanes that offer food and shelter for wildlife as they move between larger habitat areas.

## **Payments**

Annual payments for 10 to 15 years based on soil rental rate with additional 10%. Up to 90% cost-share for establishment costs. Maintenance cost-share of \$4/acre per year.

## **Eligible land**

Land cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001. Continuous CRP. Minimum width 66 feet, maximum width 198 feet.



## **Permanent Wildlife Habitat (CP 4D)**

Establishing permanent habitat for wildlife, with a mix of 5 species of trees, grasses, forbs and shrubs best suited

## **Payments**

Owners bid land in, usually between \$100 to \$150 per acre per year for 10 years. 50% cost-share reimbursement for installation. Maintenance cost-share of \$4/acre per year.

## **Eligible land**

Land cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001 that is otherwise eligible for the General CRP signup.



## **Riparian Buffers (CP22)**

Trees, shrubs and grasses along or near a stream or water body. Filters sediment and nutrients from surface runoff, aids wildlife.



## **Wetland Restoration (CP 23)**

Trees are an option in restoring the functions and values of wetland ecosystems that have been used as cropland.



## **Wetland Restoration Non-floodplain (CP 23A)**

Trees are an option in restoring the functions and values of wetland ecosystems that have been used as cropland.



## **Rare and Declining Habitat (CP 25)**

At this point, most plantings are native grasses and forbs, but tree planting in oak savanna habitat may be



#### Payments

50% cost-share on establishment costs and 40% practice incentive payments; annual rental payment for up to 15 years based on cash rent for last 3 years; sign-up incentive of \$100/acre. Maintenance cost-share of \$4, \$8 or \$9 per year.

#### Eligible land

Cropland, marginal cropland and pastures. If on cropland, it must have been cropped 4 out of 6 years from 1996-2001. Buffer may be up to 180 feet wide. Other eligibility, see NRCS.

#### Payments

Annual payments for 10 to 15 years based on soil rental rate (usually \$100 to \$150 an acre depending on soil types). 50% cost-share for establishment costs. Maintenance cost-share of \$4 per year.

#### Eligible land

Land within the 100-year flood plain. Cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001. Minimum 20' wide buffer for this continuous CRP practice.

#### Payments

Annual payments for 10 to 15 years based on soil rental rate (usually \$100 to \$150 an acre depending on soil types). 50% cost-share for establishment costs. Maintenance cost-share of \$4 per year.

#### Eligible land

Land outside the 100-year flood plain. Cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001. Minimum 20' wide buffer for this continuous CRP practice.

#### Payments

Landowners bid land in, usually between \$100 to \$150 per acre per year for 10 to 15 years. 50% cost-share reimbursement for installation. Maintenance cost-share of \$4/acre per year.

#### Eligible land

Land cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001. Must be able to restore critically endangered and threatened habitats. General CRP practice.

## Planting trees boosts chances for acceptance into the General CRP

The General Conservation Reserve Program is administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). The program cost-shares tree planting and grass establishment on highly erodible land and pays landowners an annual rental payment for up to 15 years. Sign-ups for the general CRP are announced by USDA.

Under the general CRP sign-up landowners can receive between \$100 to \$150 per acre land rental rates and 50% cost-share reimbursement for installation of the CRP practice. The general CRP involves a highly competitive bidding process that uses an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) to score each bid offer. There are several ways to improve your offer or bid using trees:

- **Plant Trees.** Trees provide additional EBI points because they remain a vital and integral part of the landscape long after the expiration of the CRP contract. Trees also provide the most efficient long term method of locking up atmospheric carbon. Tree plantings are eligible for 15 years of land rental payments. They may also be eligible for a ten year re-enrollment in CRP under the existing tree practice (CP11) prior to the expiration of the original CRP contract.
- **Plant Good Habitat.** A mix of either trees or grasses that provides maximum benefits to wildlife in your area will maximize your offer. Assistance with species selection and planning for tree plantings is provided by IDNR Foresters.
- **Enter the Steepest, Most Erodible Soils.** Some CRP offers may be enhanced by dividing fields and excluding flatter less erodible soil from your bid offer. Work with your county FSA office or DNR forester or biologist to determine if this option would improve your chances to get into the program.
- **Plant Hardwoods.** Hardwood tree planting of-

## How to sign up for CRP

Both the general and continuous Conservation Reserve Programs (CRP) are administered through the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (FSA). Technical assistance for tree planting is provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Iowa DNR Bureau of Forestry.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will make a determination on land eligibility and the IDNR Forestry Bureau will assist with project planning. Contact any of these agencies for more information on tree planting assistance through CRP. Local offices, including IDNR district foresters, are located in USDA Service Centers- usually in the county seat.

## On-line CRP information:

If you get involved in planting trees, with or without CRP assistance, you will benefit from working with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR).

These agencies have information available on-line on other conservation program assistance, tree recommendations, tree and shrub sources, management information, and other technical and financial issues in association with tree planting on privately owned land.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
[www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/](http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/)

Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
[www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com)

USDA Farm Service Agency  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/ia/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ia/)





#### **Field Windbreak (CP 5A)**

Two to 8 rows of trees and shrubs planted in a field to reduce soil erosion and enhance wildlife habitat.



#### **Vegetative Cover, Trees (CP 11)**

Allows land already established with trees and in a current CRP contract to be re-bid into another contract.



#### **Shelterbelt (CP 16A)**

Three to 16 rows of trees and shrubs that protect farmsteads and feedlots from wind, saving energy and providing wildlife habitat.



#### **Living Snow Fence (CP 17A)**

Tree, shrub and native grass snow catch practice to cut snow removal costs, enhance public safety and wildlife.

#### **Payments**

Annual payments for 10 to 15 years based on soil rental rate with additional 20%. Up to 90% cost-share for establishment costs. Signup bonus \$100 an acre. Maintenance cost-share of \$6 per year.

#### **Payments**

Annual rental rates on a bid basis, usually between \$100 and \$150 an acre. No establishment cost-share. Maintenance cost-share \$4/acre per year.

#### **Payments**

Annual payments for 10 to 15 years based on soil rental rate. Up to 90% cost-share for establishment costs. Signup bonus \$100 an acre. Maintenance cost-share of \$6 per year.

#### **Payments**

Continuous CRP practice with 50% cost-share and 40% incentive payment for installation. Rental rate based on maximum rental rate of 3 predominate soils. \$100/ac. signup bonus. Maintenance cost-share \$6/acre per year.

#### **Eligible land**

Land cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001. Continuous CRP program.

#### **Eligible land**

Land currently enrolled in CRP as a CP3 or CP3A practice that is established to trees.

#### **Eligible land**

Land cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001. Continuous CRP program.

#### **Eligible land**

The north or west sides of lanes, roads, railroads and public facilities. Land cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001.



#### **Marginal pasture wildlife buffer (CP 22)**

Most plantings for this practice are grasses, shrubs and forbs. Signup bonus \$100 an acre. Up to 90% cost-share for establishment. Signup bonus \$100 an acre. Up to 90% cost-share for establishment.



#### **Bottomland timberland established on wetlands (CP 31)**

Hardwood tree and shrub plantings on land prone to flooding. Signup bonus \$100 an acre. Up to 90% cost-share for establishment.



#### **Expired CRP Hardwood Pasture (CP 32)**

Practice to re-enroll fields already planted to trees with a CRP practice.



#### **Habitat Buffer for Upland Birds (CP 33)**

Native warm season grasses, forbs, legumes and limited shrub plantings to provide food and cover for quail and upland birds.



#### Payments

Annual payments for 10 to 15 years based on soil rental rate (usually \$100 to \$150 an acre). 50% cost-share for establishment costs and 40% incentive payments. Signup bonus \$100 an acre. Maintenance cost-share of \$8 or \$9 per year.

#### Eligible land

Marginal pastureland adjacent to water bodies. This is a continuous CRP practice. Minimum 20' wide buffer, maximum 120' wide buffer.

#### Payments

50% cost-share not to exceed \$300/acre from FSA, plus 25% establishment cost-share and \$100/acre signup bonus from State of Iowa. Annual rental rate based on cash rent as in other CRP practices. Maintenance cost-share of \$4/acre per year.

#### Eligible land

Cropland in the 100-year flood plain of a perennial stream or river, planted to an agricultural commodity four out of six years from 1996 to 2001.

#### Payments

Annual rental rates for 10 years on a bid basis, usually between \$100 and \$150 an acre. No establishment cost-share. Maintenance cost-share of \$4/acre per year.

#### Eligible land

Land planted to trees in a CRP contract that expired on or before September 30, 2001. This is a General CRP signup practice.

#### Payments

Annual payments for years based on soil rental rate (usually \$100 to \$150 an acre). Up to 90% cost-share for establishment costs. Signup bonus \$100 an acre. Maintenance cost-share of \$4/acre per year.

#### Eligible land

Land cropped four out of six years from 1996 to 2001. Continuous CRP practice used around field edges. Minimum 30' wide, maximum 120' wide.

ters the most EB1 points of all CRP practices.

### Incentive payments from the Continuous CRP

The continuous sign-up under the Conservation Reserve Program provides excellent financial incentives for landowners who want to protect highly sensitive environmental areas such as riparian areas adjacent to streams and creeks and other water bodies and bottomland areas. Tree planting practices eligible include bottomland tree planting, living snowfences, field windbreaks, forested buffers, and shelterbelts.

Land is eligible for this program if it has been planted or considered planted 4 of 6 years from 1996 to 2001 or it is marginal pastureland that is suitable for the intended CRP use. An eligible landowner may sign up at any time. Financial benefits include:

- 50% cost share reimbursement for establishing tree and shrub cover.
- 40% practice incentive payment for installing a forested riparian buffer or field windbreak (this brings total cost-share reimbursement to 90%).
- An upfront sign-up bonus payment of \$100 an acre.
- A 15 year annual rental payment averaging between \$120 to \$150 dollars per acre on crop ground and \$84 dollars per acre on marginal pasture.

